

## New Digital Communications Recommendations to Help Americans Prepare in Advance of an Emergency

WASHINGTON, Aug. 31, 2011 - Recent weather events such as Hurricane Irene, the earthquake on the East Coast and other natural disasters highlight the need for Americans to prepare for emergencies. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the American Red Cross, the Ad Council and Google Crisis Response are collaborating to launch a new preparedness web resource, [Get Tech Ready](#), on behalf of the [Ready](#) campaign.

Released just before the start of National Preparedness Month, this new resource educates individuals and families about how using modern-day technology can help them prepare, adapt and recover from disruptions brought on by emergencies or disasters.

A recent American Red Cross survey showed that the internet, including online news sites and social media platforms, is the third most popular way for Americans to gather emergency information and let their loved ones know they are safe.

"As technology becomes more a part of our daily lives, people are turning to it during emergencies as well. We need to utilize these tools, to the best of our abilities, to engage and inform the public, because no matter how much federal, state and local officials do, we will only be successful if the public is brought in as part of the team," FEMA Administrator, W. Craig Fugate.

"During Hurricane Irene, we saw people using new technologies in many ways, whether it was thousands of people downloading our new shelter finder App or others using our Safe and Well site and social media to let their friends and family know they are OK, " said Gail McGovern, President and CEO of the American Red Cross. "People now have more varied resources available at their fingertips that they can use before, during and after emergencies."

Get Tech Ready provides Americans with tips on how to use technological resources before, during and after a crisis to communicate with loved ones and manage your financial affairs. Preparedness tips on the website include:

- Learn how to send updates via text and internet from your mobile phone to your contacts and social channels in case voice communications are not available;
- Store your important documents such as personal and financial records in the cloud or on a secure and remote area or flash or jump drive that you can keep readily available so they can be accessed from anywhere; and
- Create an Emergency Information Document using the Ready.gov Family Emergency Plan [template in Google Docs](#) or by downloading the [Ready Family Emergency Plan](#) to record your emergency plans.

"Get Tech Ready is a resource that will truly help people in the US and around the world understand how they can use widely available technology to prepare for potential crises," said Nigel Snoud, Product Manager, Google Crisis Response. "We're thrilled to be working with FEMA, the American Red Cross, and the Ad Council on this public service project."

"We are delighted to collaborate with FEMA, Google and the American Red Cross to expand our *Ready* messages through this new web site to educate more Americans about the vital need to get prepared in advance of an potential emergency," said Peggy Conlon, president & CEO of the Ad Council. "The web

site will provide access to critical resources to Americans addressing the importance of using technology as part of their individual and family preparedness plans."

Launched in 2003, National Preparedness Month is designed to encourage Americans to take steps to prepare for emergencies throughout the year. The *Ready* campaign was also launched in 2003 by FEMA in partnership with the Ad Council. Since its launch, media outlets have donated more than \$900 million in advertising time and space for the PSAs. The new PSAs will air in advertising time that will be entirely donated by the media.

#### **FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY**

FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.

#### **AMERICAN RED CROSS**

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies nearly half of the nation's blood; teaches lifesaving skills; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a charitable organization — not a government agency — and depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its mission. For more information, please visit <http://www.redcross.org/> or join our blog at <http://blog.redcross.org>.

#### **The Advertising Council**

The Ad Council ([www.adcouncil.org](http://www.adcouncil.org)) is a private, non-profit organization that marshals talent from the advertising and communications industries, the facilities of the media, and the resources of the business and non-profit communities to produce, distribute and promote public service campaigns on behalf of non-profit organizations and government agencies. The Ad Council addresses issue areas such as improving the quality of life for children, preventive health, education, community well-being, environmental preservation and strengthening families.

FEMA does not endorse any non-Federal government organizations or products.